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ABSTRACT

A report describes "Television as a Meeting Place" (TMP), a series of sixteen 30-minute television programs/modules. TMP concentrates on enhancing the acquisition of German as a second language for the approximately 200,000 young immigrant children 7 to 10 years old, particularly Turkish children, living in the Federal Rupublic of Germany. The target population is extremely heterogeneous, ranging from German-born Italian or Yugoslav children to Turkish children who have come to Germany after their seventh year. TMP aims primarily at development of oral language skills, particularly active listening skills and productive language mastery, to give children language tools they can use directly in contact situations they may encounter frequently. The TMP modules evaluated in this case study each consists of a 15-minute course unit, structured in short blocks of 2.5 minutes each; a 15-minute course film, telling a story that the learner can retell/replay or finish in his or her own words or role play; and teacher's guide, intended for those without special training in teaching second languages. The teacher's guide describes different classroom uses of the modules. TMP was first broadcast in 1979-80 and evoked positive reactions from teachers and Turkish families; a revised version, prepared in response to teachers' evaluations, was first broadcast in 1981-1982. (MH)

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The CDCC's Project No. 7 :

"The education and cultural development of migrants"

CASE STUDY ON TELEVISION AS A MEETING PLACE

(Federal Republic of Germany)

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The CDCC's Project No. 7:

"The Education and Cultural Development of Migrants"

Case study

on

"Television as a meeting place"

(Federal Republic of Germany)

by

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The views expressed in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Council for Cultural Co-operation of the Council of Europe

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A German and a Turkish boy walk on the market place in a big German city. At a stall which sells all kinds of knives, the German boy steals one of the knives and both boys run away. The Turkish boy is caught and accused of stealing the knife. A policeman comes along and the boy is led away to the police-station.

This is a scene from "Television as a Meeting Place", a programme intended to enhance facilities of the German language for children, living in the Federal Republic of Germany, who have insufficient mastery of the German language. The programme is broadcast weekly by German school television.

This report gives a description of "Television as a Meeting Place", its rationale and the result of an evaluation study.

1. CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT

The Federal Republic of Germany is one of the European nations with a large migrant population. In 1981, approximately four and a half million foreigners were living in the Federal Republic of Germany.

About 75% of these persons can be categorised as labour migrants. Half of the migrant workers have been living the Federal Republic of Germany for more than 8 years. Of all the elementary school-children, almost 10% is of a non-German nationality. Since this ten per cent is concentrated in certain districts of big industrial cities and areas, the numbers of individual schools in these parts in much larger than the average percentage suggests. While this phenomenon is typical for all countries with immigrant populations, the situation in the Federal Republic of Germany has a specific character. The migrant group is dominated by one nationality. About half of all migrants are of Turkish descent, followed by Italians, 13% and Yugoslavs, 10%.

The number of people from Greece, Spain and Portugal is much smaller. The Turkish group also arrived much later than the other migrant nationalities who are, as a consequence, more dispersed and more integrated in German society. The German population tends to think about migrants as Turkish nationals and migrant problems are synonymous with "Turkish" problems.

The majority of the Turkish families originate from rural areas in Turkey or have recently migrated within Turkey from a rural area to a bigger town.

Many of them come from eastern or middle Anatolia; a fairly large group originates from the region around the Black Sea. Within Turkey there are significant differences between the regional, religious and ethnic groups. One of the most important differences is probably the region of origin. People from the same region in Turkey share a common social identity and they feel obliged to help others who come from the same village or region. This cultural trait plays an important role in the residential patterns of Turkish families in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Those of the same region tend to live together in certain inner city-districts. One reason for this phenomenon is that families already living in a particular city attract people from their own region of origin. They can also help families, recently arrived, to find homes, they can initiate them in administrative matters and so on.

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For instance, the entire population of one Anatolian village has migrated to the city of Hamburg and lives closely together in one of the districts of Hamburg, maintaining to a large extent the social structure of the original situation in Turkey.

These residential concentrations allow the Turkish families to maintain traditional cultural traits and customs.

Consequently, with regard to important aspects of life the Turkish migrants as a group are less integrated in German society. This means that many Turkish children in the Federal Republic of Germany grow up in surroundings dominated by the traditional Turkish value system and in a predominant Turkish language environment, having only superficial contacts with the majority group.

Especially for girls and women, the only contact outside the school with the German language is often through television. And even this contact is less profound than it could be, due to the many Turkish video productions used in many Turkish families.

Contrary to the main expectation, even children born in the Federal Republic of Germany enter school with a very incomplete knowledge of the German language and in districtswith a high concentration of Turkish families this may be the case over a long period. At the same time, the level of development in the Turkish language can vary a lot among different Turkish children living in the Federal Republic of Germany. For one thing there can be considerable linguistic differences between families, that speak different Turkish dialects.

These differences are large enough for people from different parts of Turkey to have difficulties in understanding each other. However, they are not of an essential linguistic nature. the linguistic differences mainly concern pronunciation and vocabulary.

The grammar of the dialects is essentially the same as that of Istanbul Turkish, which is accepted as the standard language of Turkey. People who speak regional dialects use a stunted, abridged form of the standard language, for instance by omitting or simplifying word-endings.

As the language of migrants in the Federal Republic of Germany mainly has an oral tradition, a very limited vocabulary consisting of 400 to 500 words is used.

Young Turkish children, growing up in the Federal Republic of Germany, will go through a moment in their development, in which their vocabulary is unsufficient to describe their surrounding world.

For children, living in high density "Turkish" districts, the mastery of both languages, a Turkish dialect and German, is often deficient.

The language situation of first generation migrants is strongly related to their level of schooling in Turkey. People from the rural parts of Turkey learn the standard language of their country only in school and develop it further by reading. In this respect, first generation migrants had very few opportunities to develop their knowledge of standard Turkish. It is estimated that 70 to 80 per cent of the women are illiterate in Turkish and that 60 per cent of the male population over 35 years cannot read nor write Turkish.

Analysis of the complicated language situation in the Turkish and other migrant groups reveals different language education needs. One major need is to enhance the speaking capacity of Turkish children of the German language. This need was the starting point in conceiving a school television programme that concentrates on the acquisition of German language as a second language for young children living in the Federal Republic of Germany.

This plan resulted in the development of the programme "Television as a Meeting place" which in this report will often be shortened to TMP. "Television as a Meeting Place" is a co-production of the General German Broadcasting Society that uses the first television network and the programme was developed and produced by the school television department of the North German Broadcasting Society in Hamburg. This is one of the institutions which form the General German Broadcasting Society.

2. THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE PROJECT

TMP consists of sixteen different television programmes or modules of 30 minutes each. Every module has two main parts: a course unit of 15 minutes and a motion picture, with a duration of 15 minutes as well. The course unit is structured in short blocks of approximately two and a half minutes each, so that the relatively long programme period is heavily structured in different parts. There is neither teacher involvement in the programme nor any other appearance by persons other than actors. Every block in the course unit has a different contents and objective. The first block is an introduction in which plasticine figures carry out meaningful actions and dialogues to warm up the learner for what is to come.

The second block deals with lexical elements of the German language. By way of short moving cartoons, this block introduces new concepts and words for vocabulary building and broadens the insight into functions of certain words. The third block demonstrates the use of sentences in communication situations. By means of real persons playing specific situations, the learner gets an idea of which language forms are functional and/or appropriate in these situations. In the fourth block, phonetic information is given. In a sequence of images, objects are shown names - names carry specific phonetic aspects of the German language. The fifth block introduces "speech acts" or "speech intentions".

Here, communicative situations are acted to demonstrate certain objectives the speech is used for. For instance a Turkish boy wants to join a group of playing children. Just looking at them will only irritate the children. If he has any intention to join them he will have to use language to fulfil this intention. Language or speech is the act to bring about the desirable result. This element of speech is demonstrated in the fifth block of the course unit. The block not only demonstrates speech intentions, it also provides the language tools to reach these goals in the form of simple, effective sentences.

Conversely, these sentences strictly follow the communicative situations in which they are presented. This block does not teach one isolated aspect of language like vocabulary or phonetics but requires a holistic approach to language in situations.

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The course unit is closed by a sixth block which depicts a funny situation giving an ironic turn to the language tools the child has just learned in the previous block. It was hoped that the core of the pun could be understood by children across cultural differences.

The second part of a programme module is a short motion picture. The film gives a story that stimulates speech in order to incite the learner to retell or replay the story or finish it in his own words or role play. The film about the stolen knife is an example of such an open end. The film itself shows clearly that the Turkish boy is falsely accused but it does not tell the audience whether he will be exonerated. Children who have watched the film can create their own ending by role playing or even discuss different endings.

In the films, all speech acts are always simultaneously demonstrated by images or actions on the screen. The characters in the picture never speak about events in the past or in the future when this cannot be supported by images. The speech tools introduced in the speech act block are brought into the picture in real life situations. In this way, sentences learned in the language lesson, can immediately be applied in daily life. For this reason, the film unit is placed after the course unit. These remarks lead us closely to the central guiding principle of "Television as a Meeting Place". This principle can be stated as follows. For beginning learners of a second language, learning situations should be created which offer the learner opportunities to identify with and at the same time provide him with the language tools to express himself and his world. Together the course unit and the film unit form one programme module. The sixteen modules are of course broadcast in a certain order, but do not necessarily have to be used in that order. Module 10 can be used before module 7 and so on. This gives an opportunity to copy the modules on video-tape and to use them according to need or insight. Because the course unit is structured in blocks, it is possible to stop the tape after a given block and do exercises with the material just introduced on the tape before proceeding to the next one.

In fact this is what the authors of TMP consider to be the optimal use of the modules in the school situation.

Teachers who used TMP are provided with a guide describing proposals for the use of the modules in the classroom. The teacher's guide is rather detailed and obviously written for persons who do not have a special training in teaching second languages.

"Television as a Meeting Place" was developed for children between 7 and 10 years whose mother tongue is not German and who do not systematically possess acquired knowledge of the German language. TMP should be useful in the school situation but also in the home environment of the child. Apart from the regular classes, non-German children in the German school system can be found in separate preparatory classes or are taken out of the regular classroom for some hours for a week-time to receive extra lessons in the German language. In all these school situations, TMP can be used as an extension or an enrichment of the normally used language scheme. The television materials concentrate on themes the teacher alone can hardly introduce in the classroom. TMP gives an opportunity to enrich the lessons by bringing in communicative situations from real life.

In conceiving the programme, care was taken that the modules were self sufficient and could therefore be enjoyed in the family situation. It was expected that television could be an effective means to break through the isolated situation of many families and to reach the parents and other members of the family like elder girls who do not attend school. In this manner, the actual target group could be enlarged, broadening the age group of children from 6 to 16 years and maybe even include the parents.

In the school year 1979-1980, the number of non-German children in the age group of 7 to 10 years was approximately 200,000. This is half of all the non-German children in the German school system. Expanding the target group to the 6-12 years range would mean a possible audience of almost 400,000 children.

"Television as a Meeting Place" has to deal with extreme forms of heterogeneity in the target population. Firstly, the children in the target group differ widely in regard to their knowledge of the German language. Italian or Yugoslav children are often born in the Federal Republic of Germany from parents who have been living for a very long period in the Federal Republic of Germany. At the other extreme, many Turkish children have come to the Federal Republic of Germany and German schools after their seventh year. Secondly, the children differ according to nationality, life styles and living conditions. As a consequence they differ in interests, motivational patterns and learning aptitude. Thirdly, there is a large age range in the target group. The themes of the modules and the approach taken have to be suitable both for young people of seven years old and for children who are about to leave primary education. The most obvious source of differences among migrant children stems from different ages of entrance into the German school system. Many non-German children are now either born in the Federal Republic of Germany or have arrived at a very early age. Within the Turkish population however, there is still a significant number of children who migrate to the Federal Republic of Germany after the compulsory school entrance age. In many communities, separate preparatory classes are organised for these children. In these classes a large amount of time is spent on teaching German as a second language. The teachers of these classes need to maintain a high degree of variety of learning situations in order to keep the children motivated. The heterogeneity of the children also demands a differentiated lesson approach. In this regard, a televised second language programme may be helpful. The same pictorial lesson material can be used at different language levels. For beginners, the teacher can have the children talk about the objects and activities as shown on the screen. For more advanced learners, the teacher can go beyond the material given and have the children discuss possible preliminary and further aspects of the material at hand.

However, even for the children who enter before the compulsory age special language measures are needed. Only a small percentage of these children will have attended nursery school and the high density Turkish residential patterns are not conducive to German language development.

As was described earlier teachers found that these typical second generation children have many language problems which prevent them from having a normal school career in primary education.

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Therefore, second generation children are often found in preparatory classes or they have other special facilities. "Television as a Meeting Place" can be integrated into these special facilities.

"Television as a Meeting Place" aims primarily at the development of oral language skills. Therefore, active listening skills and productive language mastery are the main aims. The programme wants to give children language tools which can be used directly in contact situations that children frequently encounter and for language intentions which are of interest to children. For the parents insight into how German school education functions was the main aim. From the modules parents can also derive an impression of educational objectives which can be of help to the progress of their children. In this sense, co-operation between the educational objectives of the school and the family can be brought about. Finally, non-German parents themselves could possibly benefit from the programme by obtaining some useful German language skills while watching "Television as a Meeting Place". As mentioned before, TMP was developed and produced from 1977 to 1979. It was broadcast for the first time during 1979-1980. During this period an evaluating study was carried out. This led to significant changes in the programme. The resulting final version will be broadcast every year on a nationwide basis until 1987.

3. RUNNING OF THE PROJECT

3.1 The development of a rationale

The original idea for TMP grew out of an existing programme for second language learning which used cartoons as additional material for a written second language scheme. The cartoons showed plasticine figures carrying out all kinds of activities. In the original scheme these cartoons were used as a motivational device at the end of an oral lesson by having the children realise that they could understand a story in the German language. The first rough idea for "Television as a Meeting Place" was to make modules by taking one of these cartoons, to combine it with some studio scenes and to have a teacher give a short lesson on certain language aspects. After looking at many televised second language programmes, this idea was rejected and a new rationale began to develop. This rationale was developed from a critique of existing second language programmes from a study of social and cultural characteristics of the target group and from an exploration of modern second language teaching theories.

To begin with, it became evident, that very few televised courses were available for the first stages of second language development. Almost all existing televised courses expected some knowledge of the second language concerned and by doing this, they took much for granted with regard to the knowledge of children.

Since "Television as a Meeting Place",was to be suitable for young children with no or little knowledge of the German language, new approaches had to be found by the producers.

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Secondly, existing televised second language programmes depended heavily on written or oral lessons as the main element of teaching.

Properly speaking, the television materials were either an addition to or an illustration of the written materials. In "Television as a Meeting Place", the television modules would function as the primary and sometimes as the only means of instruction, sufficient in itself to bring about language learning.

At the same time, it should be possible to integrate the television modules into the school programme.

This required a simultaneous visualisation of language in the programme: the meaning of the spoken language should be comprehensible immediately from the images of the screen. This principle was of a great importance to the production of TMP.

The decisive source for the programme's philosophy came out of a study of modern theories of second language learning. Especially, aspects of pragmalinguistics and sociolinguistics played an important role in conceiving "Television as a Meeting Place".

Language is regarded as a tool for meaningful communication. Meaningful communication not only requires grammatical competence, but it also needs communicative competence. While grammatical competence derives from the formal aspects of language, leading to mastery of the language according to correct semantic or syntactic rules, communicative competence deals with the use of language rules in actual practice. Grammatical competence does not tell the learner what to say in different situations to different persons about different subjects.

For instance, excusing oneself will be said in a different way when used to a relative than towards one's boss at work. Rules of discourse which are quite normal in one social group can be inappropriate when used in other groups. There is no linear relation between speech intentions and language forms used to express them. This relation is governed by implicit rules of language use that the learner has to know in order to be able to use language appropriately, according to situational demands.

Second language teaching should enable the learner to reflect on the relation between speech situation and the language tools to be used in them. Second language teaching should provide the learner with the knowledge and the facility to adapt or vary these tools according to the situational demands.

A communicative approach to second language teaching has far reaching consequences for sequencing and selection of learning contents. While traditional second language schemes are sequenced according to grammatical categories, communicative approaches take a sequence of communicative functions as the backbone of programme progression. This is not to imply that grammatical correctness is not important as a teaching goal. The implication is, that second language teaching is not exclusively derived from grammatical progression.

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Communicative approaches depend on the availability of meaningful sequences of speech acts and concurrent language forms. There are some proposals to categorise all possible speech intentions, but none of these can be regarded as fully authoritative .Therefore the producers of "Television as a Meeting Place" looked for communicative situations that allow the learner to orient himself in the German social environment. This was done in order to achieve three objectives. The first objective is to make the learner capable of making statements about himself. Secondly, the learner should be able to explain himself to others. Finally, the learner should be ready to participate in the regular German school system.

After the production team had delineated communicative situations with their speech intentions, the concurrent language forms or sentences were established.

As many different language forms can be used for one particular speech intention, it was possible to select speech tools with sufficient grammatical simplicity for beginners.

In the teacher's guide, possibilities are given to enlarge or differentiate these language forms for more advanced learners. In the next paragraph the actual proceedings in this part of the production process will be detailed.

3.2 The production process

As the beginning of the production process, sixteen cartoons and sixteen 15 minute motion pictures from an earlier second language course were available. TMP used the cartoons as the opening block of every course unit. Six of the motion pictures were selected from the existing material and ten 15 minute motion pictures had to be newly developed. In the normal production process of a motion picture, one or more writers are hired to make a summary for a story. After that a global treatment of the picture is written and finally a scenario. This procedure was followed at first by the producers of TMP. It appeared however to be quite difficult to make writers understand what kind of material was needed. Finally the production team decided to write their own scenarios. Every scenario production started by reflecting upon a situation a migrant child can identify himself with.

After some brainstorming in the small production team, one of the members wrote a summary which in turn was discussed by the production team. In this way, a scenario for the film was developed. Since the director of the motion pictures participated fully in this process, it was relatively easy for him to produce the pictures according to the goals of the programme. During the brainstorming sessions and the discussions on the motion pictures, the ideas for the course unit developed at the same time. The contents of the blocks for the course unit would be derived from the language material of the scenarios. For instance, the vocabulary for the lexical block should deal with the theme of the motion picture. The same goes for the sentence forms to be used in the blocks. Apart from this, a separate list of speech intentions was used on the basis of publications which gave categories of speech intentions. (eg Van Ek, 1977). As the production of the scenarios progressed, some speech intentions, which the team thought to be important, were left unused. In such cases, themes had to be found, which could be a vehicle for these speech intentions.

By visiting schools and talking to teachers, children were found, who could take part in the motion pictures. Frequent visits to districts with a high density of migrants also led to the discovery of suitable locations for the films. During the whole production process, the team tried to make contracts with migrant persons in the schools and in the communities. The motion pictures were shot in spring of 1979.

All course units began with a cartoon from the older material. From the start, the production team was not happy with these films. The cartoons were originally developed to be shown at the end of a language lesson. As a consequence, they used fairly complicated language forms. To make the language accessible for the children the rest of the blocks of the course unit had to be used to make the cartoons comprehensible. After the revision, these cartoons were left out of the programme.

As stated above, the material for the vocabulary block was derived from the scenario of the motion pictures. The most important criterion in selecting the vocabulary was that the words could be visually represented by image or action. For the sentence block, simple sentence structures were used which can function in many different situations. For instance, if a child has been taught to say "Can I join the game?" he can learn very quickly to ask: "Can I join the singing?" Care was taken to use sentences from every day speech, and to avoid bookish sentences which often appear in second language courses.

For the phonetics block, a list with phonemes which are difficult for children from certain migrant language groups was used. For instance the "umlaut" as in the German word "böse" is difficult for Spanish and Italian children, but relatively easy for Turkish children. Diphtongs, however, are quite difficult for Turkish children. The phonetics block used rhyme words to isolate target sounds to be learned. The production process was supervised by a committee of persons appointed by the German national government and by the governments of the "Länder".

4. EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

As "Television as a Meeting Place" was broadcast for the first year, an evaluation study amongst the Turkish target group was carried out. The aim of the evaluation study was to establish information which could be used to ameliorate the programme.

Two important questions arose. One question had to do with the assessment of the TMP by the migrant families who followed the programme at home.

The second question dealt with the reception of the television materials in schools.

One third of a sample of Turkish families had heard of "Television as a Meeting Place" and most people of this group had watched approximately one to nine of the modules. When parents watched the series they were often stimulated by the children to do so.

The programme was most often watched without any verbal comments. Only in 20% of the families, comments in the home language were made while watching.

The possible reason for this is that the language in the module was almost fully understood by all tele-viewers. Normally, Turkish families talk about television programmes only to exchange clarifications of puzzling aspects. Many respondents in the sample thought that it could be possible to learn some German by watching the programme regularly. One remarkable positive reaction was that Turkish parents thought the programme presented Turkish people in a positive way to German people. Quite a number of Turkish respondents claimed that by watching TMP they learned something about themselves.

As to the reception of "Television as a Meeting Place" in schools, the evaluation study tried to find information by questioning a sample of teachers.

It appeared that most teachers became aware of the existence of TMP by positive remarks of colleagues who had already worked with the programme. 60% of the participant teachers had some experience in the educational use of audio-visual media before they worked with TMP. This percentage is higher than the average. More than half of the participating teachers were appointed for special second language lessons and almost 40% were working in remedial classes. The age of the pupils ranged from kindergarten to 16 years old with an average age of 9 years. 80% of all participating children were of Turkish nationality. This is very much higher than the average percentage of Turkish children in German compulsory education.

Teachers had to spend more time to prepare themselves for lessons in which TMP was used. Most often mentioned as preparation activities were previewing the module, selecting blocks or films, finding ways to integrate parts of the module into the lessons as a whole and preparing materials like video-recorders and tapes for use. All participating teachers were provided with the Teacher's Guide. More than half of the teachers evaluated the Guide positively as to the information concerning the selection of blocks for separate use in the lessons.

As to the pedagogical information on how to give the lessons, the guide was evaluated less positively. Two thirds of the teachers thought that previewing the modules was absolutely necessary.

Teachers used "Television as a Meeting Place" in a variety of ways in their lesson programme. Most often, the module was copied on video-tape and used by interrupting the tape at given points. In general, the programme could be very well adapted to the different needs of the school situations and children. Sometimes, classes carried out activities which were suggested in the module. One class cooked a meal on a basis of a written recipe as was proposed in the television module. Another class visited a police station as a follow-up to one of the modules. Without video-recording, the flexibility of the instructional process is severely limited. Almost all teachers who received TMP directly on a television set watched the entire module without interruption. In this case, the oral lesson most often followed the viewing of the module.

Modules used with interruption were more often evaluated positively than modules viewed as a whole. The reasons given indicate that some parts of the module have to be watched several times in order to profit

sufficiently from them. Exercises also have to begin immediately after a block is viewed in order to be effective. Sometimes, teachers only used those blocks which fitted in the lessons planned and left out the other blocks completely. Repetition of a block did not diminish motivation to speak. On the contrary, seeing the same blocks several times stimulated the children to talk more.

It seemed that pupils liked to repeat sentences in the same sequence over and over again. Sometimes, the children had watched a module at home before it was offered at school. Many teachers reported an increase of motivation for the lesson in these children.

Teachers were asked for statements concerning the appropriateness of "Television as a Meeting Place" in some educationally relevant aspects.

Firstly, the motion picture and the course unit were considered equally suitable as an instructional means. A high positive evaluation of the course unit correlated with a high evaluation of the block, the vocabulary block and the speech intention block. The other blocks had obviously less influence on the overall evaluation of the course unit. In general, one can say that blocks which stimulated speech in children were evaluated highly positive. The majority of the children did not get the point of the last block.

TMP embodies some explicit innovative aspects of second language teaching. The central innovative aspect is the presentation of language as a tool for meaningful interaction. From this perspective, the programme is built around speech acts or speech intentions. As a consequence there is no grammatical progression or sequencing within the series of modules. Analytic language reflection has to be provided by the teacher and the second language learning scheme he or she uses. People of the group of the evaluation study found that part of the teachers using "Television as a Meeting Place" believed in this approach from the start of the programme. Other teachers decided to work with TMP to test the validity of this approach or to get experience of it. At the end of the programme about 80% of the participating teachers acknowledged the validity of the speech intentions as the basic element of the programme. Less support was found for the heavy stress on listening and speaking skills in TMP. Almost 20% of the responding teachers would have liked more attention paid to reading and writing skills. The majority of teachers indicated a need for additional exercises in writing German. Some teachers developed their own writing exercises to be used with certain modules. A second innovative feature of "Television as a Meeting Place" is the modular design of the course units. In general, this feature was positively rated, but teachers who used video-recording said so more often than teachers who watched every module without interruption. Many teachers found it difficult to connect the different blocks of the course unit in a natural way. Especially, the introductory cartoon in the first block gave problems of this kind. Since the language of these films was often quite complicated, the rest of the course unit would have to be spent explaining these complex language forms in order that pupils could understand them.

The evaluation study tried to assess whether TMP had a positive effect on the integration of foreign children into their German

surroundings. According to the producers, children who participated in TMP should be better orientated in German society and should be able to express themselves about their own situation.

Only about half of the responding teachers thought that TMP had a positive integrative effect. Many teachers indicated their inability to assess this effect. Some teachers thought it better to separate language learning from social growth. They assume that children should first learn the language and only after this people can think of integration. Some teachers do not realise how very absorbing visual information about the German world can be for foreign children. For instance, the children would watch a lengthy street scene in which, for a German, nothing really interesting happens. If teachers cannot understand this they won't be able to use this as a speech training situation. So the question of integrational effect probably cannot be answered fully by teachers because of their selective perspective. Almost all children could identify themselves with persons and situations in the programme. As children watched more modules, they enjoyed seeing the well known figures which reappear in every module. This led to spontaneous speech of children. Many pupils began to exercise words or sentences while watching the module or by repeating them as often as they could before the next block began.

As a whole, "Television as a Meeting Place", scored very high on motivational aspects. In 91% of all applications teachers reported high levels of attention and motivation. There was a high correlation between identification and reality. Modules nearer to the real life situations of the children or modules which give more opportunities for identification were rated to be more motivating and elicited more spontaneous speech or dialogue. Children identified themselves most with situations which give some kind of a conflict, for example, the module about prejudice, friendship, fear of the dentist, etc. It appears that for the target group social integration is the central problem of identity development.

Many teachers applauded the informative or cognitive worth of some of the motion pictures. An example of this is the film about consulting a dentist. The film can clarify concepts which are difficult to bring up in a school situation.

However, the children paid so much attention to some pictures that they were not able to concentrate on the cognitive content. Teachers are advised to take this into account when preparing for the use of a module. Teachers often reported spontaneously that the modules were comprehensible to the children. The language heard and the action seen on the screen seemed to fit nicely together. This is a very important feature, since teacher and children cannot turn back to a common language when something cannot be understood. Thus, the referential value of the language used should be completely evident by the visual material. The congruency between visual and language material must be seen as the most decisive innovative element of "Television as a Meeting Place".

The evaluation study showed some concrete indications for the instructional behaviour of teachers. Some teachers interrupted the module too long or too often with exercises or teacher talk. This had a negative effect on the concentration and the learning of the children,

especially when this happened while the motion pictures were shown. On the other hand, teachers who repeated blocks or pictures sometimes discovered that children were more attentive during the repetitions and were not inclined to talk less. As one teacher stated: "The slow sequence of words and the drama of the images increase the motivation of the children to talk with each other without being bored."

On the basis of the evaluation study, the producers of TMP undertook a major revision of the material.

Firstly, six new motion pictures were produced as a replacement of the films which were taken over from an earlier second language programme. This was done because of the difficult language used in the old pictures. Secondly, the course units were revised in several places. As the language of the cartoon blocks was too complicated, all sixteen cartoons were taken out of the programme. At the same time many of the other blocks were changed so that they were less focussed on only one specific language aspect. For instance, the vocabulary blocks were broadened so that they contained sentence material as well. In this way, the situations painted can be less artificial and words can be used in a more functional way.

As a whole the course unit contained more vocabulary after revision. In total, 17 new blocks were developed which stressed semantic aspects of language. With the revision, all course units were given a phonetical block and for the speech intention blocks 30 situations for language use were revised or newly produced. Finally, all blocks were more clearly separated, each block provided with a number. In this way, it is easier for teachers to select specific blocks for elaboration.

Thirdly, the Teacher's Guide was completely revised. It now contains information in a better organised format. For every module, a work sheet is given which the teacher can copy for the class. The Teacher's Guide also provides more information on how to integrate the televised material into the second language lessons. Thus it is expected that teachers do not need to preview every module to select exercises for use with the video recording.

The revised version of "Television as a Meeting Place" was broadcast for the first time in the 1981/1982 school year.

5. TRANSFERABILITY

It is not very likely that "Television as a Meeting Place" can be transferred to another country than Germany. For instance, the Swiss broadcasting society which participated in the production of TMP did not use the modules because the Swiss German dialect is very different from the German standard language used in TMP. Also, literal translation is often impossible because the programme paints typical situations and the specific physical environment of urban Germany. This environment may not be familiar to children in other countries and the programme will loose much of its referential value. In some countries "Television as a Meeting Place" is used as a means for teaching German as a foreign language to non-German children. However, the actors in the motion picture talk German with an accent. There is a danger that children in other countries will imitate this accent.

While literal transfer of the modules to other countries is highly questionable these other countries can benefit from the important innovative aspects of "Television as a Meeting Place". Such features would be the close match between language and visual material, the stress on the relation of language learning and language use or the emphasis on offering situations children can identify themselves with.

Also the production process as such should be closely looked at by persons from other countries. It appears that intensive work in a small team where all members have their own responsibility for every aspect of the programme could be useful information.

After the success of TMP, the producers are planning the development of a language programme for non-German children and youths in the age group of 13 to 16 years. The structure of this programme will be the same as for TMP, but the pictures will focus on the daily problems and experiences of older migrant youths.

While the televised material will be limited to listening and speaking skills the Teacher's Guide will give instructions for reading and writing activities. Finally, the new series will take its semantic material from a core vocabulary of about a thousand German words. At the time of writing it was not sure whether this project could be carried out.